"But we delivered Him (Abraham) and Lot to the land which We have blessed for all the people of the world"(Qur'an;21:71)."Glory to (God) Who transported His Servant (Muhammad) by night from the inviolable House of Worship (at Makkah) to the Remote House of Worship (at Jerusalem) the environs of which we have Blessed.."(Qur'an;17:1)"The fair promise of the Lord was fulfilled for the children of Israel"(Qur'an;7:137)."But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain you; how much less this house which I have built!"(Solomon, 2 Chronicles 6:18, 1 Kings;8:27)

The Covenant, Chosen Race & Palestine

Palestine is the most complex geopolitical and religious issue, confronted by the humanity, which if left unresolved will continue to be threat to the world peace. This historic flashpoint which kicked off the clash of civilizations, centuries ago, still has the potentials to flare up to repeat the history with unpredictable terrible consequences. While the followers of three Abrahamic faiths; Judaism, Christianity and Islam have the historic, religious, emotional and sentimental attachments with this land, no sane person can agree to deny the right of the Palestinian people as human being to enjoy the fruits of freedom in their own land in this age of freedom and democracy. The Zionists claim that; '*this land has been given to them by God as His chosen people*'. In order to ascertain the veracity of this claim and to contemplate possible peaceful resolution, this issue has been reviewed in the light of Bible, Qur'an & History.

By: Brigadier (R) Aftab Ahmad Khan, MA,MBA

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In the name of Allah The Most Gracious The Most Merciful

Jerusalem: The Blessed Land, Bible, Qur'an & History

The Covenant, Chosen Race & Palestine

The Covenant

Introduction:

Jerusalem is the main city of Palestine; historically there is evidence of existence of population in the area around 3000 B.C.E. The city derives its name form Hebrew; *Yerushalayim* in Arabic it is called *Al-Quds* Located in the heart of historic Palestine, it is nestled between the West Bank and Israel. It is holy to Judaism as the site of the Temple of Jerusalem, to Christianity because of its association with Jesus (pbuh), and to Islam because of its connection with the *Mi'rāj* [Prophet Muhammad's,(pbuh) ascension to Heaven]and prayer direction (*Qibla*) of Muslims for some period. Jewish shrines include the Western Wall; Islamic holy places include the Dome of the Rock and Mosque.

In 1000 BC King and Prophet Dawood [David] (pbuh) made it the capital of Israel. Razed by the Babylonians in the 6th century BC, it thereafter enjoyed only brief periods of independence. The Romans devastated it in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, banishing the population. From 637 C.E onwards it was ruled by various Muslim dynasties, except for short periods during the Crusades. Rule by the Ottoman Empire ended in 1917, and the city became the capital of the British mandate of Palestine. It was thereafter the subject of competing Zionist and Palestinian national aspirations. Israel claimed the city as its capital after the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 and took the entire city during the Six-Day War of 1967. Its status as Israel's capital has remained a point of contention: because the Palestinians have also declared it as capital of their future state, official recognition by the international community has largely been withheld pending final settlement of the issue. The roots of present turmoil due to Zionist oppression of Palestinians, has been condemned world wide especially the Islamic world. The Zionist Jews claim divine right to this land through Covenant of God with Hebrews.

The Covenant:

In the Hebrew Scriptures, Covenant is an agreement or treaty among peoples or nations, but most memorably the promises that God extended to humankind (e.g., the promise to Noah never again to destroy the earth by flood or the promise to Abraham that his descendants would multiply and inherit the land). God's revelation of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai created a pact between God and Israel known as the *Sinai Covenant*. According to Christian traditions Jesus Christ established a new covenant with God. Islam holds that the Last & Final Covenant was between God and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for all the humanity till eternity.

Hence for proper understanding, the doctrine of 'Covenant, should be studied in the light of Bible, Qur'an and the history. Without going in to the historic details of

the issue, well known to the readers, here the scriptural aspects are being covered. There is general agreement that Prophet and Patriarch Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all) believed and worshiped same God. In Arabic this supreme God is called Allah, while Hebrews have been calling Him; El 'Elyon, Yahweh (Jehovah), elohiym,(*el-o-heem*) or Adonai. God is the supreme creator and Sustainer of all the worlds. He is the God of all the creatures and people, He is not the God of any one group only, though He loves and prefers those who obey Him and dislike those who are disobedient, transgressors, and disbelievers. He is Kind and Merciful to those who repent and perform deeds pleasing to Him. He is not unjust; God established His Covenant with the humanity, individually as well as collectively through prophets.

What is meant by Word 'Covenant'?

According to 'Miriam Webster Collegiate' dictionary, 'covenant' is a formal, solemn, and binding agreement; a written agreement or promise usually under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action or the common-law action to recover damages for breach of such a contract. 'Covenant' is a contract or agreement between two parties. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word ברית '[*'tyrb berith'*] is always thus translated as covenant. '*Berith'* is derived from a root which means "to cut," and hence a covenant is a "cutting," with reference to the cutting or dividing of animals into two parts, and the contracting parties passing between them, in making a covenant (Gensis:15:1-21; Jeremiah;34:18-19). The corresponding word in the New Testament Greek is, διαθηκη [*diatheke dee-ath-ay'-kay*] which is, however, rendered "testament" generally in the Authorized Version. It ought to be rendered, just as the word *berith* of the Old Testament, "covenant." In Qur'an, two Arabic words عهد ميثاق [a*ahad*' , '*methaq*'] are translated as 'covenant'.

Covenant in Qur'an and Bible: The word 'covenant' is used in variety of meanings in Bible & Qur'an:

1) In Qur'an 'covenant' of God with Abraham and his obedient decedents has been mentioned as *aahd* (covenant, pledge) (Qur'an;2:124) and with the Children of Israel (Qur'an;2:83). However: "Those who break Allah's Covenant after it is ratified, and who sunder what God has ordered to be joined, and do mischief on earth: these cause loss (only) to themselves."(Qur'an; 2:27).
2) The covenant with the people of scripture (Jews & Christians) is also mentioned: "And remember God took a Covenant (*methaq*) from the people of the Book, to make it known and Clear to mankind, and not to hide it; but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And vile was the bargain they made!"(Qur'an;3:187).
3) The word 'aqad' is used for marriage contract (Qur'an;2:235, 237), oath (Qur'an;5:89). 'Ahad' is also used for 'treaty'(Qur'an;8:56),promise (Qur'an;17:34),

4) A covenant or compact between man and man (Genesis;21:32), or between tribes or nations (1Samuel;11:1; Joshua;9:6,15). In entering into a covenant, Jehovah was solemnly called on to witness the transaction (Genisis;31:50), and hence it was called a "covenant of the Lord" (1Samuel;20:8). The marriage compact is called "the covenant of God" (Proversbs;2:17), because the marriage was made in God's name. Wicked men are spoken of as acting as if they had made a "covenant with death" not to destroy them, or with hell not to devour them (Isaiah;28:15,18).

5) The word is used with reference to God's revelation of Himself in the way of promise or of favour to men. Thus God's promise to Noah after the Flood is called a covenant (Genisis;9:1-29; Jermiah;33:20, "my covenant"). We have an account of God's covenant with Abraham (Genisis;17:1-27, comp. Leveticus;26:42), of the covenant of the priesthood (Numbers;25:12-13; Deutrenomy;33:9; Nehemiah; 13:29), and of the covenant of Sinai (Exodus; 34:27-28; Leviticus; 26:15), which was afterwards renewed at different times in the history of Israel (Deutronomy;29:1-29; Joshua;1:18; 2Chororonicals; 15:1-19; 23:1-21; 29:1-36; 34:1-33; Ezra;10:1-44; Nehemiah;9:1-38). In conformity with human custom, God's covenant is said to be confirmed with an oath (Deuteronomy;4:31; Psalms;89:3), and to be accompanied by a sign (Genesis;9:1-29; 17:1-27). Hence the covenant is called God's "counsel," "oath," "promise" (Psalms;89:3-4; 105:8-11; Hebrews;6:13-20; Lu 1:68-75). God's covenant consists wholly in the bestowal of blessing (Isaiah;59:21; Jeremiah;31:33-34).

6) The term covenant is also used to designate the regular succession of day and night (Jermeiah;33:20), the Sabbath (Exodus;31:16), circumcision (Genesis;17:9-10), and in general any ordinance of God (Jeremiah;34:13-14).

7) A "covenant of salt" signifies an everlasting covenant, in the sealing or ratifying of which salt, as an emblem of perpetuity, is used (Numbers;18:19; Leviticus; 2:13; 2Chronicles;13:5).

8) Covenant of Works, the constitution under which Adam was placed at his creation. In this covenant, (1.) The contracting parties were (a) God the moral Governor, and (b) Adam, a free moral agent, and representative of all his natural posterity (Romans;5:12-19). (2.) The promise was "life" (Mathew;19:16-17; Galatians;3:12). (3.) The condition was perfect obedience to the law, the test in this case being abstaining from eating the fruit of the "tree of knowledge," etc. (4.) The penalty was death (Genesis;2:16-17). This covenant is also called a covenant of nature, as made with man in his natural or unfallen state; a covenant of life, because "life" was the promise attached to obedience; and a legal covenant, because it demanded perfect obedience to the law. The "tree of life" was the outward sign and seal of that life which was promised in the covenant, and hence it is usually called the seal of that covenant. [According to Qur'an, Adam and Eve repented and were pardoned by God, (Qur'an;2:37, 7:23), however they were sent to this world, those who

follow His guidance, have nothing to fear but those reject or defy it, will fall in to hell].

According to common Christian belief (not shared by Jews, Muslims and many early and even some present Christians): 'This covenant is abrogated under the gospel, inasmuch as Christ has fulfilled all its conditions in behalf of his people, and now offers salvation on the condition of faith. It is still in force, however, as it rests on the immutable justice of God, and is binding on all who have not fled to Christ and accepted his righteousness'.

Covenant of God with Humanity and Prophets: God is linked with humanity through different covenants: Firstly; Covenant with each member of humanity; secondly Covenant with people through His prophets, this includes specifically the covenant of God with Abraham (as a reward of being obedient servant of God, who succeeded in the test of his obedience to God) and his descendents through their prophets culminating to the final covenant with humanity through His last prophet.

The First Direct Covenant of God with Humanity:

1) Much earlier than the creation of humanity, God first created all the spirits of humanity, which testified Him to be their Lord; this was the 'First Covenant', which is binding accordingly on each individual. God says:

    "O Prophet, remind mankind about incident when your Lord brought into existence the offspring from the loins of Adam and his descendants (virtually each single individual of mankind) and made them testify about themselves. God asked them: "Am I not your Lord?" They all replied: "Yes! We bear witness that You are." This We did, lest you mankind should say on the Day of Resurrection: "We were not aware of this fact that You are our Lord and that there will be a Day of Judgment."(Qur'an;7:172). He brings the humankind into this world in succession, each one at appointed time, spirit is breathed in to him. This spiritual heritage, the individual covenant with God, is part of his nature of every human being as human consciousness.

2) The Covenant is fulfilled by human to acknowledge that Allah is the Creator, Cherisher, and Sustainer; therefore they should acknowledge their duty to Him. When people so testify concerning themselves, the obligation is as it were assumed by them; for it follows from their very nature when it is pure and uncorrupted. Knowledge of right and wrong is ingrained in human nature, God says: "by the soul and Him Who perfected it and inspired it with knowledge of what is wrong for it and what is right for it: indeed successful will be the one who keeps it pure, and indeed failure will be the one who corrupts it!"(Qur'an;91:7-10). Some remain conscious of it while others tend to suppress this awareness.

3) In addition to giving form and nature, God has also given guidance to all the creations (Qur'an;20:50). The humanity is expected to be steadfast in the belief of natural faith, part of human conscious. God says: "Therefore, stand firm in your devotion to the upright faith - the nature made by God, (hanefa fitr'ah) the one on

which mankind is created - and the laws of Nature ordained by God cannot be changed. That is the ‘Standard True Religion’, but most among mankind do not know.”(Qur’an;30:30). The ‘True Nature’ (hanefa fitr’ah), "true" is used in the sense in which it is said, "the magnetic needle is true to the north", the ‘First Covenant’ is part of human nature. Those who have been privileged to receive the ‘Truth’ should never hesitate or swerve but remain constant, like the men of knowledge. As turned out from the creative act of God, man is innocent, pure, true, free, inclined to right and virtue, and endowed with true understanding about his own position in the Universe and about Allah's goodness, wisdom, and power. That is his true nature, just as the nature of a lamb is to be gentle and of a horse is to be swift. But man is caught in the webs of customs, superstitions, selfish desires, and false teachings. This may make him pugnacious, unclean, false, slavish and hankering after what is wrong or forbidden, thus getting deflected from the love of his fellow-men and the pure worship of the One True God. The problem before the messengers and prophets had been to cure this crookedness, and to restore, (*hanefa fitr’ah*) human nature to what it should be under the Will of God; the uncorrupted pure nature. The "standard True Religion or the ‘Straight Way’ is thus contrasted with the various human systems that conflict with each other and call themselves separate "religions" or "sects". Allah's standard Religion is the one, based upon total surrender to the Will of God. The man has been endowed with the intellect so that he could used this faculty to differentiate between right and wrong; truth and falsehood.

4) The human intellectual power of rational thinking and reason is further facilitated by the teachings of the great Messengers or teachers sent to every nation. God says:"…And there never was a people, without a Warner having lived among them (in the past)."(Qur’an;35:24). Where such teachers do not come into direct contact with an individual or a generation, their revealed scripture is available to them which is conveyed by the preachers (dai). Even if some one does not receive the message through direct means then the true faith can be revived through means of the ‘Intellect and Reason’, His ‘signs’ spread all around and true nature (hanefa fitr’ah) part of human conscious (the 1st Covenant). This is the reason that even some of African tribes cut off from the civilized world worship One God without images. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been reported to have mentioned that every human child is born in true nature (Al-Fitra) which is obedience to God (Islam) and then his parents make him Jewish, Christian or Magian. The scholars stipulate that, if the message of ‘true faith’ (complete obedience, surrender to God - Islam) does not reach to some one, then in hereafter he will be judged by the (hanefa fitr’ah), the human nature conscious of One God (monotheism- Tawhid). God says: “We charge no soul with more than it can bear; We have a Book of record which shall clearly tell the truth, and they shall not be treated unjustly.”(Qur’an;23:62).

The Covenant of the Prophets:

From Noah to Jesus & Muhammad (peace be upon them all): There is an implied covenant on all created things to follow the Law of God, which is the law of their being; But there is a special implied covenant with all Prophets, strict and solemn, that they shall carry out their mission, proclaim Allah's Truth without fear or favour, and be ever ready in His service in all circumstances. That gives them their position, dignity, and their tremendous responsibility in respect of the people whom they come to instruct and lead to the right Path. God says: "And remember We took from the Prophets their Covenant as (We did) from thee (Muhammad): from Noah Abraham Moses and Jesus the son of Mary: We took from them a solemn Covenant"(Qur'an;33:7). The narrative of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) is similar to the Bible, with some differences narrated in Qur'an more prominently at Chapter;7, 11, 23, 26, 71 and elsewhere.

The Seven Laws of Noah: The covenant of God with Noah and all creatures according to Bible: "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." (Genesis;9:16). According to traditional Judaism, God gave Noah and his family seven commandments to observe when he saved them from the flood. These commandments, referred to as the 'Noahic or Noahide Commandments', are inferred from Genesis, Chapter. 9, & Jermiah:33:20: 1) To establish courts of justice. 2) Not to commit blasphemy. 3) Not to commit idolatry. 4) Not to commit incest and adultery. 5) Not to commit bloodshed. 6) Not to commit robbery. 7) Not to eat flesh cut from a living animal.

According to Jewish belief the Noahic commandments are binding on all people, because all people are descended from Noah and his family. These commandments are fairly simple and most of them are recognized by most of the world as sound moral principles. any non-Jew who follows these laws has a place in the world to come. The 613 *mitzvot* of the Torah, on the other hand, are only binding on the descendants of those who accepted the commandments at Sinai and upon those who take on the yoke of the commandments voluntarily (by conversion). In addition, the Jews opine that the Noahic commandments are applied more leniently to non-Jews than the corresponding commandments are to Jews, because non-Jews do not have the benefit of Oral Torah to guide them in interpreting the laws. Hence non Jews automatically get relegated to a lower position to the Jews.

The Covenant with Prophet Abraham (pbuh): Though Muslims believe in all the Hebrew prophets and scriptures, but the Last reveled Scripture Qur'an, preserved in its original revealed shape forms, the criteria (*Furqan*) of tracing and confirming the true revelations of God in the texts of old scriptures, mixed up with commentaries and errors during loss, translation, retranslation, rewriting spread over centuries. Some errors may be deliberate and some unintentional distortions by the scribes. Some verses form Qur'an about the Covenant of God with Abraham, his decedents & the status of Promised Land are mentioned here. Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) has been

highly appreciated in Qur'an: "Abraham was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to God, true In Faith, and He joined not gods with God. He showed His gratitude for the favors of God, who him, and guided Him to a straight way. And we gave Him good In This world, and He will be, In Hereafter, In the ranks of the Righteous. So we have taught Thee the inspired (Message), the ways of Abraham the true In Faith, and He joined not gods with"(Qur'an;16:120-123)

The contents of covenant of God with Abraham & his decedents can be traced in the following verses of Qur'an: "But we delivered Him (Abraham) and (his nephew) Lot (and directed them) to the land which We have blessed for all the people of the world. And we bestowed on Him Isaac and, as an additional gift, (A grandson), Jacob, and we made righteous men of every one (of them). And we made them leaders, guiding (men) by Our command, and we sent them inspiration to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers, and to practice regular charity; and They constantly served us (and us only). "(Qur'an;21:71-73). This verse signifies that the Blessed Land is not for any specific group [Hebrews or Jews alone] but for all the people of the world [including Muslims and Christians].

"And call to mind through this divine writ, Ishmael, Behold he was always true to his promise, and He was an apostle (of God), a prophet."(Qur'an'19:54.),"We gave him (Abraham) the good news of Isaac - a prophet - one of the righteous. We blessed him and Isaac both. Among their progeny there are some who are righteous and some who are clearly wrong doing to their own souls. "(Qur'an;37:112-113), "And commemorate Our servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, possessors of power and Vision. Verily we did choose them for a special (purpose)- proclaiming the Message of the Hereafter. They Were, In Our sight, truly, of the company of the Elect and the good. And commemorate Isma'il, Elisha, and Zul-Kifl: Each of them was of the company of the good. "(Qur'an;38:45-48),"And we gave (Abraham) Isaac and Jacob, and ordained among His progeny Prophethood and revelation, and we granted Him His reward In This life; and He was In the Hereafter (of the company) of the Righteous."(Qur'an;29:27), "Remember that when Abraham was tested by his Lord with certain commands, he fulfilled them. God said: "Surely, I will make you the leader of mankind." "What about my offspring?" Asked Abraham. "My Covenant," said God, "will NOT apply to the evil doers."(Qur'an;2:124).

Here the claim of the children of Israel as "Chosen People of God" by only virtue of their decent from Abraham, who was made "a leader of mankind", has been negated. It is conditional to the obedience of God by not doing evil acts. The is also understandable through common sense. Bible also affirms: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee (Abraham) and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee".(Genesis;17:7). "Now therefore, If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:"(Exodus;19:5).

They were chosen to be the vehicle of the message of God, the highest honour which any nation can receive: “And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.”(Deuteronomy;8:19-20).

The covenant with Abraham is narrated in Bible: “And I will make of you (Abraham) a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless you, and curse him that curses you: and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed.”(Genesis;12:2-3). In Bible, deliberate effort appears to have been made (to change the words, Qur’an:5:13) to exclude Ishmael, but he is still found to be addressed by God as seed of Abraham: “And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed” (Genesis:21:12-13).

A controversy has raged between the followers of the Bible and the adherents of Islam as to which of the sons of Abraham, Ishmael or Isaac was offered as a sacrifice. It is important to note that, a peculiar sanctity was attached to the first-born both of man and of cattle among people right since the time of Adam, it was especially of great importance among the Israelites. God claimed that the first-born males of man and of animals should be consecrated to him, the one as a priest (Exodus;19:22,24), representing the family to which he belonged, and the other to be offered up in sacrifice (Geneis;4:4). The laws concerning this redemption of the first-born of man are recorded in Exodus;13:12-15; 22:29; 34:20; Numbers;3:45; 8:17; 18:16 and Leviticus;12:2,4. Even the first-fruits of the ground were offered unto God just as the first-born of man and animals. Ishmael, without any doubt was first born son of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). The Bible is quite clear in designating the offering: “He said, "Take your son, YOUR ONLY son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Mori'ah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."(Genesis;22:2). If at anytime, an offspring of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) can be described as "THINE ONLY SON: it could only be Ishmael, because for more than THIRTEEN YEARS, he was the only son and seed of Abraham. God Almighty acknowledges Ishmael as the "SON AND SEED" of Abraham in the Book of Genesis. At NO TIME was Isaac the only son and seed of Abraham. The false pen of the scribe was in the hand of the Hebrews who edited the Books of Moses, as the prophet Jeremiah lament: “How do ye say, We are wise, and the law (the Torah) of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in VAIN made he it; the PEN OF THE SCRIBE IS IN VAIN.”(Jeremiah;8:8). When the Hebrews are found to convert an Israelite into an Ishmaelite when no motives are involved, then how much easier for them to change the word "you only son ISHMAEL" to : your only son ISAAC!" Hence the claim in Islamic traditions that the son

offered for the sacrifice was Ishmael not Isaac stands validated. This incidence took place at Makkah where Muslims celebrate this event every year during annual pilgrimage (Hajj).

Jacob's wife Leah's maidservant, Zilpah, bore him Gad and Asher, and Rachel's maidservant, Bilhah, bore him Dan and Naphtali. The children born through maidservants of wives of Jacob are not dealt with contempt in line with the prevalent custom, where as in case of Ishmael, born from Hager, the prejudice and dichotomy of Israelites is too palpable. Hagar was the wife of Abraham (Genesis;16:3). "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."(Genesis;22:18)

Qur'an mentions the grant of revelations to the house of Abraham, including Ishmael: "Do they, perchance, envy other people for what God has granted them out of His bounty? But then, We did grant revelation and wisdom unto the House of Abraham (*aal Ibraahem*- Descendants), and We did bestow on them a mighty dominion:"(Qur'an;4:54). "Also mention In the Book (the story of) Ishmael: He was (strictly) true to what He promised, and He was an apostle (and) a prophet."(Qur'an;19:54)

The descendants obviously include the progeny of Ishmael and Isaac (peace be upon them). Jacob and his descendents have been specially mentioned in addition to Abraham's at Genisis;17:1-27 & Leviticus;26:42, while excluding Ishmael from the covenant, though was first born son of Abraham, his seed and a Prophet, he remains part of House of Abraham.

Abraham's Legacy: "Behold! His Lord said to him: "Bow (thy will to Me):" He said: "I bow (my will) to the Lord and Cherisher of the Universe." And This was the legacy that Abraham left to His sons, and so did Jacob; "Oh My sons! God hath chosen the Faith for you; then die not save as men who have surrendered (unto Him). "Were ye witnesses when death appeared before Jacob? Behold, He said to His sons: "What will ye worship after me?" They said: "We shall worship Thy God and the God of Thy fathers, of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac One God, and unto Him we have surrendered."(Qur'an;2:131-133). "They say: "Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided (to salvation)." say thou: "Nay! (I would rather) the Religion of Abraham the True, and He joined not gods with God."(Qur'an; 2:135)

Covenant with Moses and Children of Israel: It is described in Bible: "Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD has spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I

speak with you, and believe you forever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready by the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. And you shall set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that you go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever touches the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet sounds long, they shall come up to the mount. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready by the third day: come not near your wives. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceedingly loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the lower part of the mount. And mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke of it ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." (Exodus 19:5-18).
"O Children of Israel! Remember the special favor which I bestowed upon you; that I exalted you above all other nations."(Qur'an;2:122). Abraham & Ishmael, while building Ka'ba prayed "O Lord, make us both submissive to You (Muslims); and make our descendants a nation that will be submissive to You (Muslims). Teach us our rites of worship and forbear our shortcomings; surely, You are the Acceptor of repentance, the Merciful."(Qur'an;2:128).
Violation of Covenant is breaking the Covenant: "And if you shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhors my judgments, so that you will not do all my commandments, but that you break my covenant:" (Leviticus;26:15)
Covenant with Prophets & Decedents of Abraham: The Mountain of Sinai (*Tur-u-Sinin*) a prominent mountain in the Arabian desert, in the peninsula between the two arms of the Red Sea. Here the Ten Commandments and the Law were given to Moses. Hence it is now called the Mountain of Moses (*Jabal Musa*). The Israelites encamped at the foot of it for nearly a year. The Covenant was taken from them under many portents (Exodus:19:5,8,16,18), which are described in Jewish tradition in great detail. God says in Qur'an: "Remember that when We took a Covenant from you and We lifted the Mount of Tur over your heads saying: "Take what We have given you firmly and listen to Our Commandments," you replied: "we have heard but we will not obey." So much was the love of that calf in their hearts due to their unbelief. Tell them: "If you are real believers, then why does your faith prompt you to do such evil things?"(Qur'an;2:93). Under thunder and lightening the mountain must indeed have appeared an awe-inspiring sight above to the Camp at its foot. And the people solemnly entered into the Covenant: all the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." But they said in their hearts: "We shall disobey". The Jewish traditions assume that all

the spirits of decedents of Israel, even to be born in future were present is some way to undertake the covenant.

Moses asked them to enter the Promised Land: "(Moses said) O my people! Enter the holy land which God has promised you and turn not back ignominiously for then will ye be overthrown to your own ruin."(Qur'an;5:21). The spies reported that the land was rich, but the men there were too strong for them. The people of Israel had no courage and no faith, and Moses remonstrated with them, they had to suffer for forty years in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land. **Children of Israel, which was despised, became a great and glorious nation under David and his son Solomon**, who had goodly territory, and was doubly blest. His land and people were prosperous, and he was blessed with wisdom from God. His sway and his fame spread east and west. **And thus promise of God with the Children of Israel was fulfilled:** "And We made a people considered weak (and of no account) inheritors of lands in both east and west lands whereon We sent down our blessings. **The fair promise of the Lord was fulfilled for the children of Israel …."(Qur'an;7:137).** "And after that We said unto the children of Israel: "Dwell now securely on earth - but [remember that] when the promise of the Last Day shall come to pass, We will bring you forth as [parts of] a motley crowd!"(Qur'an;17:104). Motley crowd denotes a human crowd composed of innumerable heterogeneous elements, good and bad, strong and weak, fortunate and unfortunate: in short, it characterizes mankind in all its aspects. It is obviously used here to refute, once again, the idea that the children of Israel are a "chosen people" by virtue of their Abrahamic descent and, therefore, a priori and invariably destined for God's grace. The Qur'an rejects this claim by stating that on Resurrection Day all mankind will be judged, and none will have a privileged position.

Special Covenant-Moses, Jesus & Their Followers To Believe in Prophet to Come (Muhammad, pbuh): This was the general covenant particularly with the Prophet Mosses and Jesus, still forms part of their scriptures: "The people who were given revelations earlier are bound by their own oaths, sworn solemnly in the presence of their own Prophets: "Behold! God took the covenant of the Prophets saying: "I give you a Book and Wisdom; then comes to you an Apostle confirming what is with you; do ye believe him and render him help." God said: "Do ye agree and take this My Covenant as binding on you?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness and I am with you among the witnesses."(Qur'an;3:81).

This covenant In the Old Testament as it now exists, Muhammad (pbuh) is foretold to Moses: "God speaks to Prophet Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from <u>among their brethren</u>, <u>like unto thee</u>, and I will <u>put my words in his mouth</u>; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him"(Deuteronomy; 18:18,19). The rise of the Arab nation in Genesis;12:2,3, 17:10-12, 20,21, Isaiah. 42:1-8, 11-13, 60:7, for Kedar was a son of Ishmael and the name is used for the Arab nation (Genesis;25:13).

Covenant in The New Testament still Exists: Muhammad (pbuh) is foretold in the Gospel of John. 14:16, 25,26, the future Comforter cannot be the Holy Spirit as understood by Christians, because the Holy Spirit already was present, helping and guiding Jesus. The Greek word translated "Comforter" is "Paracletos", παρακλητος which is an easy corruption from "Periclytos", which is almost a literal translation of "Muhammad" or "Ahmad".
[More details about Prophesies of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in Bible, visit link: http://docs.google.com/View?id=dgxfvv3_93c9fjj7cx]
Further, there were other Gospels that have perished, but of which traces still remain, which were even more specific in their reference to Muhammad; e.g., the Gospel of St. Barnabas, of which an Italian translation is extant in the State Library at Vienna. It was edited in 1907 with an English translation by Mr. Lonsdale and Laura Ragg.
[URL: https://docs.google.com/Doc?docid=dgxfvv3_77c5cxzwdc&hl=en]
Israelites Violated The Covenant: With the passage of time the Israelites violated the Covenant, as mentioned in Bible:

1) The Israelites became unfaithful to covenant engagements (Jeremiah;3:6-8, 31:32; Ezekiel;16:59).
2) Became rebellious against God (Deuteronomy;32:15;9:7; Isaiah;1:2,Exodus;32:9)
3) They often displeased God by their sins (Numbers;25:3; Deutreronomy;32:16; 1Kings;16:2; Isaiah;1:4; 5:24-25).
4) They were punished by God for; Idolatry (Psalms;78:58-64; Isaiah;65:3-7), Unbelief (Romans;11:20), Breaking covenant (Isaiah;24:5; Jeremiah; 11:10), Transgressing the law (Isaiah;1:4; 24:5-6), Changing the ordinances (Isaiah;24:5), and Killing the prophets (Mathew;23:37-38, 27:25).
5) They were scattered among the nations (Deuteronomy;28:64; Ezekiel; 6:8; 36:19).

Despised by the nations (Ezekiel;36:3), their country trodden under foot by the Gentiles (Deuteronomy;28:49-52; Luke;21:24).Their house left desolate (Mathew;24:38) and were deprived of civil and religious privileges (Hosea;3:4).
Jesus Christ, Prophet for Israelites: Finally God sent a prophet for the Israelites, Bible affirms it: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”(Acts;2:22).“But he (Jesus) answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”.(Matthew;15:24).“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew;4:17). “These twelve (disciples) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”(Matthew;10:5-7). Jesus said: “And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”(Matthew;3:9).

Jesus Christ Forewarned Jews: Jesus through said: “Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”(Matthew;21:43),“Salt is good: but if the salt has lost its taste, how shall it be restored? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dung hill; but men cast it out. He that has ears to hear, let him hear”(Luke;14:34-35, also Mathew;5:16, Mark;9:50). “What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the tenants, and will give the vineyard unto others.”(Mark;12:9).This may also be linked with: “Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in”(Isaiah;26:2). These parables apply to the Jews. They had been the children of the kingdom, or under the reign of God; having his law, and acknowledging him as King. They had been his chosen and peculiar people. But he says that now this privilege should be taken away, and they cease to be the peculiar people of God; and the blessing should be given to a nation who would bring forth the fruits thereof, or be righteous. Keeping in view the Covenant with Abraham (Genesis;12:2,3, 17:10-12, 17:20-21), it obviously refers to the Children of Ishmael, to keep the leadership within the progeny of Abraham.
Jews rejected Jesus and arranged to kill him (Luke 22:63-71, 23:1-56, John;19-42), though his innocence was also acknowledged by Pilate, the Roman ruler (John;19:4).
Deceived By Own Self-Invented Beliefs: Allah says: “The Jews and the Christians say: "We are the children of God and His beloved ones." Ask them, "Why then does He punish you for your sins? Nay! In fact <u>you are human beings like others which He has created.</u> He forgives whom He pleases and He punishes whom He pleases. To God belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and to Him is the final refuge.”(Qur’an;5:18).“This is because they say: "The fire of Hell shall not touch us; even if it does, it will be for a few days." In their religion they are deceived by their own self-invented beliefs. <u>What will they do when We will gather them together on the Day which is sure to come, when every soul will be given what it has earned and there shall be no injustice?</u> “(Qur’an;3:24-25).
Thus the Children of Israel as a community did not adhere to the Covenant in totality, though there were some exceptions: God says: “There are some among the people of the Book who truly believe in Allah and what has been revealed to you, (Muhammad), and what has been revealed to them before you. They humble themselves before Allah and do not sell the revelations of Allah for a petty price. For them, there will be a reward from their God. Surely Allah is very swift in settling the accounts.(Qur’an;3:199). “Rest assured that the believers (Muslims), the Jews, the Sabians and the Christians - whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous deeds - will have nothing to fear or to regret”.(Qur’an;5:69). “If they would have believed (in Islam) and kept themselves away from evil, there would have been a better reward from Allah, if they could understand it!”(Qur’an;2:103).
Special Favors and Non Fulfillment of Covenant: God addresses the children of Israel: “O children of Israel! Remember My favors to you; fulfill your covenant with Me and I will fulfill My covenant with you, that you should fear none but Me. <u>Believe in</u>

My revelations, which are confirming your scriptures; do not be the first one to deny My revelations, and do not sell them for a petty price, fear Me and Me alone. Do not mix the Truth with falsehood, or knowingly conceal the truth.(Qur'an;2:40-42), "…Do you believe in a part of your Holy Book and reject the rest? So what other punishment do such people among you, who behave like this, deserve, than disgrace in this world and to be driven to grievous punishment on the Day of Judgment? God is not unaware of what you do." (Qur'an;2:86), "As for those who break their covenant with God after confirming it and cut asunder what God has commanded to be joined and create mischief in the land, they are the ones on whom there shall be a curse and they are the ones who will have a terrible home."(Qur'an;13:25), "Tell them: "O people of the Book! Do not transgress the bounds of truth in your religion, and do not yield to the fancies of those people who went astray before you, They misled many others and have themselves strayed away from The Right Way."(Qur'an;5:77).

Rebellion and Disbelief in Scriptures: Rebelliousness of Jews has also been mentioned in Bible: "And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff necked people: (Exodus; 32:9)";"Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people. Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD. Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you." (Deuteronomy; 9:6-8); "Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadeshbarnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice. Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you." (Deuteronomy; 9:23-24), "Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin": (Deuteronomy; 9:27).

God address the Jews & Christians through Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

"Tell them: O people of the Book! You have no ground to stand on unless you observe the Torah, Gospel and other revelations that have come to you from your God. This revelation (The Qur'an) which has come to you from your God will surely increase the rebellion and disbelief of many of them but you should not grieve for the disbelievers"(Qur'an;5:68); "If they would have observed the Laws of Torah and the Gospel and other Revelations which were sent to them from their God, they would have certainly enjoyed abundance from above and from beneath. Though there are some among them on the moderate course; but most of them do nothing but evil".(Qur'an;5:66), "Over shadowed by ignominy are they wherever they may be, save (when they bind themselves again) in a bond with God and a bond with men; for they have earned the burden of God's condemnation, and are over shadowed by humiliation: for all this (has befallen them)" because they persisted in denying the truth of God's message and in slaying the prophets against all right: transgressing the bounds of what is

right"(Qur'an;3:112); "O people of the Book! there hath come to you Our Messenger, revealing to you much that ye used to hide In the Book, and passing over much (That is Now unnecessary). there hath come to you from God a (new) light and a perspicuous Book,(Qur'an;5:13-15)

God Reminds The Covenant: Ask Jews and Christians to Obey The Final Prophet: "Remember Allah's favor to you and the covenant by which He bound you to Himself when you said: "We hear and we obey." Have fear of God; surely God knows the secrets of your hearts."(Qur'an;5:7).; "God accepted a covenant form the Children of Israel and appointed twelve chieftains from among them and said: "I am with you; if you establish Prayers (Salah) pay Alms (Zakah), believe in My Apostles, support them [this includes Prophet Muhammad, pbuh] and give a generous loan to God (spend in charity), I will certainly forgive you your sins and admit you to gardens beneath which the rivers flow. However, if any one of you, after this, violates this covenant, he will indeed go astray from the Right Way. Even after that, they broke their covenant; as a result, We laid on them Our curse and hardened their hearts. They tempered with words out of their context and neglected much of what they were enjoined. You will always find most of them deceitful except for a few of them. Yet forgive them and overlook their misdeeds. God loves those who are kind to others. Likewise We also made a covenant with those who call themselves Christians, but they too have neglected much of what they were enjoined. As a result, We stirred among them enmity and hatred, which will last till the Day of Resurrection and soon God will inform them all of what they have done. O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Now Our Messenger (Muhammad) has come to you to reveal much of what you have concealed from the Holy Books and to pass over much which is no longer necessary. There has come to you from God a new Light and a clear Book (Qur'an), with which God will guide to the ways of peace all those who seek His good pleasure and bring them out of the depth of darkness into the light of His grace and guide them to the Right Way." (Qur'an;5:12-15).

"Do you claim that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants were all Jews or Christians? Are you more knowledgeable than God?" Who is more wicked than the one who hides the testimony he has received from God? Allah is not unaware of what you do."(Qur'an;2:140); "So if they argue with you (O Muhammad), tell them: "I have submitted myself entirely to God and so have those who follow me." Then ask those who are given the Book and those who are illiterates: "Will you also submit yourselves to God?" If they become Muslims they shall be rightly guided but if they turn back, you need not worry, because your sole responsibility is to convey the Message. God is watching all His servants very closely."(Qur'an;3:20).

Covenant Fulfillment with Abraham through Muslims: The role of leadership of mankind to convey the message of God is now the responsibility of Muslims, God says: "We have made you a (*umuh-wasta*, middle, central) middle way nation so that you may testify against mankind and that your own Messenger (Muhammad) may testify against you." (Qur'an;2:143). The place of Remote House of Worship at Jerusalem, is

sacred to Muslims as well, being their prayer direction for initial few months at Medina, till changed to Makkah, the original house of worship built by Abraham and his son Ishmael. Later it also became venue of Prophet's mystic journey, (*Mara'j*) hence highly revered by Muslims: "Glory to (God) Who transported His Servant (Muhammad) by night from the inviolable House of Worship (at Makka) to the Remote House of Worship (at Jerusalem) the environs of which we had Blessed..".(Qur'an;17:1)

Muhammad Asad [Leopold Weiss (1900-1992), Jewish convert to Islam, a scholar] writes: "It should be noted that the Prophet's Night Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, immediately preceding his Ascension was apparently meant to show that Islam is not a new doctrine but a continuation of the same divine message which was preached by the prophets of old, who had Jerusalem as their spiritual home, This view is supported by Traditions (quoted in Fath al-Bari VII, 158), according to which the Prophet, during his Night Journey, also offered prayers at Yathrib, Sinai, Bethlehem, etc. His encounters with other prophets, mentioned in this connection, symbolize the same idea. The well-known Traditions to the effect that on the occasion of his Night Journey the Prophet led a prayer in the Temple of Jerusalem, in which all other prophets ranged themselves behind him, expresses in a figurative manner the doctrine that Islam, as preached by the Prophet Muhammad, is the fulfillment and perfection of mankind's religious development, and that Muhammad (pbuh)was the last and the greatest of God's message-bearers".

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Encapsulation through History

The human habitation in Palestine is recorded to exist at least 100,000 years back. Evidence of the domestication of plants and animals can be dated to about 10,000 BC. The most notable achievement of the ancient Palestinians was the development of a linear alphabet, originated by the Canaanites in the 2nd millennium BC and picked up by the Phoenicians and Israelites about 1000 BC. The occupation of Palestine by the Hebrews, to whom the area was known as Canaan, was probably completed by the end of the 13th century BC. Palestine also remained under Egyptian control from about 1550 to 1200 B.C.E (Before Christian Era).

From the Biblical verses mentioned above read in the light of Qur'an, and the history, it may be encapsulated that Patriarch and Prophet Abraham (pbuh), [around 1800 B.C.E] upon success trial by God, was made the leader of mankind, and obedient people among his progeny (not evil doers). Then names of his sons Isaac and grandson Jacob have been mentioned, they were selected for special purpose by God. Hence initially the Prophethood was kept among their decedents, while Ishmael (forefather of Arabs and Prophet Muhammad, pbuh) the eldest son of Abraham was also a prophet of God.

Fulfillment of Covenant & Children of Israel [11Th Century B.C.E -586 B.C.E]
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The Promised Land, God have blessed for all the people of the world. Abraham settled and was buried there. Prophet Jacob (pbuh) and his children moved to Egypt during time of Prophet Joseph (pbuh). This immigration took place probably about 350 years before period of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) (may be, around 1650 B.C). The Israelis prospered until the Hyksos Kings were deposed in Egypt (1570 B.C.E), thereafter once their influence in the court diminished, Israelites were persecuted as aliens and forced into slavery. It was Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), who delivered his people from Egyptian slavery in early 13th Century B.C.E to be later reunited with other Hebrew tribes with whom they retained a sense of kinship. The land (Canaan) was given to the children of Israel over much after their move out of Egypt (around 13th Century B.C.E) under the leadership of Prophet Moses (pbuh).

'Shiloh': The Real First Israeli Temple: After the Israelite conquest of Canaan, the Tabernacle [Hebrew; 'Mishkan' ("dwelling")], in Jewish history, the portable sanctuary constructed by Moses as a place of worship for the Hebrew tribes during the period of wandering that preceded their arrival in the Promised Land] and the Ark of the Covenant [The ornate, gold-plated wooden chest that in biblical times housed the two tablets of the Law given to Moses by God. The Ark rested in the Holy of Holies inside the Tabernacle] were installed in 'Shiloh', a Canaanite town that became the central sanctuary site of the Israelite confederacy during the Period of the Judges (12th-11th century BC). The Ark was captured by the Philistines (1050 B.C.E) and Shiloh was soon thereafter destroyed. Excavations at Khirbat Sayun, Jordan, during 1920-32 suggest that Shiloh remained a ruin for several centuries. Historically and spiritually, 'Shiloh' is the actual site of 1st Temple of Hebrews, not even mentioned now.

Period of the Judges: (12th-11th century B.C.E): For roughly two centuries, Hebrews had existed as a loose confederation of tribes, dependent for their unity upon bonds of religious faith and covenant that were renewed periodically in cultic ceremonies at the central shrine at 'Shiloh'. By Saul's day, however, the tribal rallies were no match for the superior iron weapons and chariots of the Philistines, who were pressing ever deeper into the central highlands.

Saul, the First king of Israel (1021-1000 BC): Saul (Hebrew; Sha`ul), the first king of Israel was made king by the league of 12 Israelite tribes in a desperate effort to strengthen Hebrew resistance to the growing threat from locals. He defended Israel against numerous enemies.

1St Temple Constructed by Solomon: Saul was succeeded by King and Prophet David and then Solomon (10th century B.C.E). The construction of the First Temple (as called by Hebrews, disregarding 'Shiloh', the temple for first two centuries) was started during the reign of Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him), and completed in 957 B.C.E. The reign of Prophet David and Solomon (peace be upon them), was the golden period in the history of Hebrews. (Term, Jews had not yet evolved, a later development).

Hebrews after King & Prophet Solomon (pbuh): The persistent disobedience to God resulted in the divine punishment. The kingdom got divided after the death of King and Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him). Two independent Jewish kingdoms were

established in Palestine after 930 B.C.E, the ten northern tribes constituting the 'Kingdom of Israel' were known as Israelites to distinguish them from 'Jews' in the southern 'Kingdom of Judah'. The northern kingdom was conquered by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E, which led to the partial dispersion of the 10 northern tribes and their gradual assimilation by other peoples. (Legends thus refer to them as the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel). Thereafter, the name Israelite referred to those who were still distinctively Jewish, namely, descendants of the Kingdom of Judah. God sent many prophets for their guidance, some are mentioned by name like; Elisha, (9th Century B.C), Elijah,(9th Century B.C), Isaiah, (8th Century B.C), Jonah, (flourished around 785 B.C at Nineveh), Jeremiah,(7-6th Century B.C), Job (Book of Job written around 6-4th Century B.C), Elias, Ezekiel, (6th Century B.C) and Daniel (6th Century B.C).

Destruction of 1st Temple & Babylonian Exile: The history of the Israelites from 721 B.C.E time forward is predominantly the history of the tribe of Judah (hence called Jews). The southern Kingdom of Judah thrived until 587-586 B.C.E, when it was overrun by the Babylonians, Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed the 1st Temple and carried off many of the inhabitants into exile, it was beginning of 'Diaspora'(Greek "dispersion"). Historically, Diaspora Jews outnumbered the Jews in Palestine even before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Thereafter, the chief centers of Judaism shifted from country to country (e.g., Babylonia, Persia, Spain, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, and the U.S.), and Jewish communities gradually adopted distinctive languages, rituals, and cultures, some submerging themselves in non-Jewish environments more completely than others. While some lived in peace, others became victims of violent anti-Semitism. While the vast majority of Jews have supported Zionism [An organized movement of world Jewry that arose in Europe in the late 19th century with the aim of reconstituting a Jewish state in Palestine. Modern Zionism is concerned with the development and support of the state of Israel, more follows]. Orthodox Jews go so far as to oppose the modern State of Israel on the grounds that it is a godless and secular state defying God's will to send his messiah at the time he has preordained.

'Cyrus the Great' Return of Jews & 2nd Temple: When the Persians conquered Babylonia in 538 B.C.E, 'Cyrus the Great' allowed the Jews to return to their homeland, where they soon set to work to replace the magnificent Temple of Jerusalem that the Babylonians had destroyed. The 2nd Temple was completed from 520-515 B.C. Ezra (Prophet Uzair, peace be upon him) returned to Jerusalem in 458 B.C to reform the society according to Mosaic Law. So important was he in the eyes of his people that later tradition regarded him as no less than a second Moses. The 7th century C.E Jewish tribes in Arabia, even revered by calling him son of God (Qur'an;9:30). Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem in 440 B.C.

Palestine under Greco-Roman Rule: In 331 B.C.E, Greek culture was introduced into the Middle East with the conquests of Alexander the Great. Ptolemy I (367-283 B.C), a general in army of 'Alexander the Great' who succeeded him as ruler of Egypt, established an Egyptian dynasty of Macedonian kings (323-30 B.C). Palestine was ruled

by the Ptolemaic kings of Egypt throughout the 2nd century B.C. In 198 B.C Palestine fell to the Seleucids (a Hellenistic dynasty founded by Seleucus I after the death of Alexander the Great. It ruled much of Asia Minor from 312 to 64 B.C.). Maccabean were a family of Jewish patriots of the second and first centuries B.C., who were active in the liberation of Judea from Syrian rule. The Maccabean revolt (165-142 B.C); ended as a successful war for Judean political independence from Syria. The Jews were ruled by the high priests like Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C), Alexandra (76-67 B.C), Aristobulus II (67-63 B.C) and Hyrcanus (63-40 B.C)
Pompey, conquered Palestine for Rome in 63 B.C. Pompey, also seeing in Hyrcanus a means of controlling Judaea, restored him to the high priesthood and some semblance of civil authority. Herod was appointed king of Judaea (37-4 B.C.E) by Romans. Hyrcanus was allowed by Herod to return to Jerusalem; six years later, he had him executed.

Prophet Jesus Christ (pbuh) & Christianity: Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), the last messenger for the Israelites was born in 4 or 5 B.C.E. Herod Antipas became the ruler of Judea and tetrarch in Galilee (4 B.C.- 40 C.E). Prophet Jesus Christ was sent to ease the tough restrictions imposed on Jews due to hardness of their hearts and to guide them. They humiliated him and tried to kill him. God took up his prophet, though it was made to appear as if they killed him. Later some of his followers dominated the actual monotheistic followers of Jesus Christ, they created a different faith totally opposed to the monotheistic teachings of Jesus Christ, and they came to known as 'Christians'. They Consider Jesus as son of God and incarnate God, part of Trinity, miraculously born to virgin Mary, performed miracles, died at the cross for the sins of humanity, raised up on 3rd day and ascended to Heaven, to be returned before day of Judgment.
[More at: http://docs.google.com/View?id=dc77dvbh_7drfxgpg8].

Islam & Jesus Christ: According to Islamic traditions, Jesus Christ was miraculously born to virgin Mary, performed miracles, did not die at cross, raised up, will return before the day of Judgement, break the cross and kill swine, will rule the earth according to Shari'a of Qur'an and will die a natural death. [Any negative view about Prophet Jesus Christ (pbuh), his mother Mary or any other Prophet of God is considered high blasphemy, in Islam]. Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ is highly revered in Qur'an, a whole Chapter (No.19) is named as 'Mary', she being a chaste women have been exalted over all the women of the world, God made her and her son a sign for the whole world. (Quran;21:91,3:42)

Jesus Ridiculed in Jewish Texts: Jews, do not consider Jesus as messenger of God or in his miraculous birth. [*This blasphemous story is reluctantly narrated, Jesus Christ and Mary are highly revered by Muslims*]. The Talmud claims that this Yeshu (Jesus) was the son of a Jewish woman named Miriam (Mary) who was betrothed to a carpenter (more accurately, their marriage was in the stage of kiddushin, where she is legally his wife but not yet living with him or having sexual relations with him).She [Miriam (Mary)] was either raped or voluntarily slept with a Greek or Roman soldier known as Pandeira (a slander, God forbid), and Yeshu was the product of that union. Because of the status of Miriam's marriage, Yeshu is considered to be a mamzer (the product of an

adulterous or incestuous relationship). The Talmud describes Yeshu as a heretic who dabbled in sorcery and lead the people astray (into idolatry). He was stoned to death by the Sanhedrin for his crimes, and in accordance with the procedure for heretics, his dead body was hung in a tree until nightfall after his death." Allah says: "Those of the children of Israel who went astray were cursed by the tongue of David, and of Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they rebelled and used to transgress".(Qur'an;5:78).

Development after Prophet Jesus Christ (pbuh): Christianity was originally a movement of Jews who accepted Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) as the prophet and messiah, but the movement quickly became predominantly Gentile (non-Jewish) with change in the doctrine acceptable to the Greco-Roman pagans. The early church was shaped by St. Paul and other Christian missionaries and theologians; who declared Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) to be the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity, that God's love for the world is the essential component of his being, and that Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) died to redeem humankind from the Original Sin (sin committed by Adam by disobeying God). Those who followed the teachings of Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) were persecuted and marginalized.

The Christians were persecuted under the Roman Empire but by winning over Constantine I, the Emperor of Rome (306-337 C.E) who adopted the Christian faith and suspended the persecution of Christians the situation was reversed. In 313 C.E he issued, with Licinius, the Edict of Milan, granting tolerance to Christians; he also gave land for churches and granted the church special privileges. He opposed other groups, notably following Donatism (Fourth century C.E, North Africa sect, which believed in sanctity as requisite for church membership and administration of all sacraments) and Arianism (The doctrines of Arius, denying that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was of the same substance as God and holding instead that he was only the highest of created beings.), and convoked the important Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. He rebuilt Constantinople (now Istanbul) as the new Rome (330 C.E).

Jews after Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him): After Pontius Pilate, Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod I the Great was appointed the king of Judea (41-44 C.E) by Roman Emperor. He displayed great acumen in conciliating the Romans and Jews. Herod Agrippa II , a great-grandson of Herod I the Great, was the king of Chalcis in southern Lebanon and south Syria from 53 C.E, who unsuccessfully mediated with the rebels in the Jewish Revolt of 66-70 C.E. The entire kingdom passed under Roman rule in 44 C.E and was reconstituted as the procuratorial province of Judea.

Jewish Revolt and Destruction of 2nd Temple: Disturbances were frequent, caused by maladministration. The incompetence and anti-Jewish posture led in 66 C.E to the decisive and final outbreak of revolt. The Greeks massacred the Jews in many towns of Palestine. In turn, the Jews responded by slaughtering Gentiles in Samaria, Galilee, and elsewhere. The Jews were successful in an early engagement against the governor of Syria, In 67 C.E, however, Vespasian, the future emperor, with his son Titus, arrived with force and the war became increasingly bitter. By the end of 67 C.E Galilee was captured, and Judea was reduced in three campaigns, which ended with the fall of

Jerusalem in 70 C.E. The Temple was destroyed, and the city became the permanent garrison town of a Roman legion. By 73 C.E all the Jewish resistance had ceased.
After the destruction of Jerusalem: The Jews, deprived of the Temple, founded a new religious centre in the rabbinical school of Jamnia (Jabneh). The revolt in 115 C.E was put down. In 132 C.E the emperor Hadrian decided to build a Roman colony, Aelia Capitolina, on the site of Jerusalem. The announcement of his plan, as well as his ban on circumcision (revoked later, but only for the Jews), provoked a much more serious revolt, led by Bar Kokhba. It was ruthlessly repressed by Julius Severus, more than half a million people were killed. In Judea proper the Jews seem to have been virtually exterminated, but they survived in Galilee. Tiberias in Galilee became the seat of the Jewish patriarchs. No Jew was thenceforth allowed to set foot in Jerusalem or the surrounding districts. This prohibition apparently was relaxed some time later to permit Jews to enter Jerusalem once in an year, on the Day of Mourning.
While this ban was officially still in force as late as the 4th century C.E, there is some evidence that Jews visited the city at certain festival times. About the time the Bar Kokhba revolt was crushed (135 C.E), Hadrian (Emperor of Rome) proceeded to convert Jerusalem into a Greco-Roman city. He also erected temples dedicated to Jupiter and himself on the site of the destroyed Temple of Jerusalem. The Jewish presence however remained strong in Galilee. **The Jews have flourished financially all over the Christendom for centuries, however they were ill treated as hated community branded as killers of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) and money lenders. They were confined to ghettos. Jews enjoyed freedom in the Islamic world, especially in the Muslim Spain, till expelled by Christians only to be welcomed again by Muslims in Ottoman Turkey.**
Palestine under Christian Rule: With the conversion of Constantine I to Christianity early in the 4th century C.E, a new era of prosperity began for Palestine. The emperor himself built a magnificent church on the site of the Holy Sepulcher, the most sacred of Christian holy places; his mother, Helena, built two others, at the place of the Nativity at Bethlehem and of the Ascension in Jerusalem and his mother-in-law, Eutropia, built a church at Mamre. Palestine began to attract floods of pilgrims from all parts of the empire. It also became a great centre of the eremitic life; men flocked from all quarters to become hermits in the Judaean wilderness, which was soon dotted with monasteries. Eventually, Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem from 421 to 458 C.E, achieved his ambition and was recognized by the Council of Chalcedon (451 C.E) as patriarch of the three provinces of Palestine.
Jewish Revolt Suppressed by Christians: There was a revolt of the Jews in Galilee in 352 C.E, which was suppressed by the Caesar Gallus. Under Marcian (reigned 450-457 C.E) and again under Justinian I (reigned 527-565 C.E) the Samaritans revolted. Palestine, like Syria and Egypt, was also troubled by the Monophysite Controversy (a debate among Christians who disagreed with the Council of Chalcedon's assertion that the person of Prophet Jesus Christ comprised two natures, human and divine).

Gradually, however, the Chalcedonian doctrine gained ground, and Palestine became a stronghold of orthodoxy.

Palestine under Persians [615-628]: Apart from these disturbances the country enjoyed peace and prosperity until 611 C.E, when Khosrow II, king of Persia, launched an invasion. His troops captured Jerusalem (614 C.E), destroyed churches, and carried off the True Cross. Earlier Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the descendent of Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him) had already received the first revelation in 610 C.E at Mecca Arabia. In 615 C.E, when total destruction of Byzantine Empire seemed imminent, the victory of Christians over Persians in the coming years was prophesied in Qura'n;30:2-4. Accordingly in 628 C.E the Byzantine emperor Heracles recovered Palestine, and he subsequently restored the True Cross to Jerusalem, not knowing that 10 years later Jerusalem was to fall to the true followers of legacy of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him).

Change of Leadership role to Children of Ishmael: God had made a Covenant with the prophets, specially mentioned are Moses and Jesus that: they (and by implication their followers) will believe and help the prophet to come (Muhammad, pbuh) whose signs were mentioned in their scriptures, which still exist in the Old Testament and New Testament [see; http://wp.me/PCgrB-ec and 'Impact of Islam on Christianity and the West' by the author]. Due to their disobedience and continuous transgression, the Children of Israel proved them to be unworthy of leadership of mankind. Jews were forewarned by Jesus Christ (Matthew; 5:16, 21:43, Luke;14:34-35, Mark;9:50, 12:9) and Isaiah;26:2. God in His wisdom and in fulfillment of His covenant with Abraham, shifted the 'leadership of mankind' form the Children of Israel to the Children of Ishmael by appointing Muhammad (peace be upon him) as His last Prophet (1st Revelation 610 C.E) for the mankind till eternity. Though already prophesized in their scriptures [see, http://wp.me/pCgrB-2s] some Jews and Christians accepted him as a prophet, many among the children of Israel and those claiming to be the followers of Jesus Christ declined, hence not only violated the covenant but transgressed. They are at loss by disbelieving in the Prophet and scripture.

No Inheritance to Chosen People without Good Deeds: There is no special status for Chosen People or Chosen Race, due to inheritance only. The true faith (Eman) and good deeds are the normal criteria for reward and punishment. Every human being is equally responsible for his/her faith and deeds. God is Just; there is one standard of justice for all the human being. No one will be wronged on the day of judgement. Faithful believers of God and true followers of His messengers will be entitled for forgiveness of sins, if God desires He may do what ever He likes.

No peace of land is permanently allotted to the 'Chosen Race' for ever, God fulfilled His promise despite violations and transgressions by the Children of Israel at the time of David and Solomon (10th Century B.C.E).With the shift of leadership of mankind from the Children of Israel to the last Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers, (Children of Ishmael) the obligations, responsibilities of Covenant with Abraham along with the privileges and blessings also shifted.

Jerusalem & Muslim Rule [637-1917 C.E]: The most sacred sites in Islam are, the three mosques (houses of worship of God) ; 1) Ka'ba, 2) Prophet's Mosque in Medina and 3) Al-Aqsa Mosque at Jerusalem. This indicates the importance Islam attaches to Monotheism (*Tawheed*). The site of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is sacred to Muslims, for three main reasons: 1)The Second House of Worship of One God built by Solomon, the first one being Ka'ba, built by Abraham & Ishmael at Makkah. 2): Venue of Prophet's ascend to heaven (*Mair'aj*) and leading the prayer which was attended by all the prophets at this blessed place.3) The Initial Direction of Prayer (*Qibla*) of Muslims. Apart from their religious significance, they are also of great historical value. Sa'id bin Al-Musayyib reported from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "You should not undertake a special journey to visit any place other than the three Mosques: the Sacred Mosque of Makkah, this mosque of mine (at Medina), and Al-Aqsa Mosque (of Jerusalem)." This is reported by Bukhari, Muslim, and Abu Dawud (Fiqh-us-Sunna, Volume 5 Number 132c). Traveling to these three mosques is prescribed because of their special position in Islam. Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said; "Prayer in the mosque of Aqsa (i.e. Bayt al-Maqdis) has a reward of fifty thousand prayers; his prayer in my mosque (the Prophet's mosque in Medina) has a reward of fifty thousand prayers; and the prayer in the Sacred Mosque (Ka'bah) at Makkah has a reward of one hundred thousand prayers. Transmitted by Ibn Majah. (Al-Tirmidhi Hadith,752, Narrated by Anas ibn Malik).
In 637 C.E, Palestine came under the control of the Muslims, thus began the golden era of 500 years of peace and stability in Jerusalem and Palestine (The Blessed Land for all).The Muslims, Jews and Christians lived in harmony and peace. Muslims, the decedents of Abraham are adherents of true legacy of Abraham, proved themselves to be worthy of the custodianship of the heritage. Caliph Omar himself cleaned the garbage from the holy site, and the house of Worship of God (Mosque) was built in continuation of legacy, this is known as Omar Mosque near the Dome of Rock (built later in Umeyad period).
Crusaders [1095-1291] Shatter Peace of Jerusalem: The term Crusade is commonly used to refer to military expeditions organized by Western Christians against Muslim powers in order to take possession of or maintain control over the Holy City of Jerusalem and the places associated with Jesus Christ. The peace of Jerusalem was shattered by the Crusaders, who in 1095 on the call of Pope Urban II, set out and captured Jerusalem in 1099. They brutally killed around 40,000 Muslims and Jews. Between 1095, when the First Crusade was launched, and 1291, when the Muslims finally expelled Latin Christians from their bases in Syria, historians have formally enumerated eight major expeditions. Many other lesser ventures also took place, and even after 1291 there were attempts to recover what had been lost.
One of the greatest of the Muslim leaders and a man devoutly religious and deeply committed to jihad, Sultan Saladin Ayubi, expelled the crusaders in 1187 without any Christian being killed. He died in 1193, not long after the departure of the Third Crusade. Later in 1194, Crusade, Richard the Lion hearted, executed around 3,000

Muslims in the Castle of Acre. Saladin was, respected by his opponents. His death led once again to divisions in the Muslim world, and his successors were willing to continue a state of truce with the crusaders, which lasted into the early years of the 13th century. The truce was politically and economically advantageous to both sides, and the Italians were quick to make profitable trade connections in Egypt. The Franks were able to adjust themselves to a new situation and to organize what in effect was a new titular kingdom of Jerusalem centering at Acre, generally known as the Second Kingdom.

Europe's fear of Muslim power was such that the Crusade idea continues to persist well into the 17th century & beyond. The conviction that, in certain circumstances, war might be just became more deeply enrooted in the conscience of the West. Along with the now generally accepted use of the word 'Crusade' to denote any common endeavour in a worthy cause, this is one of the most enduring results of the movement. Use of term 'Crusade' by US President George Bush against suspected militants after 9/11 reflects the same mindset.

Peaceful Coexistence in Ottoman Rule - 1514-1917: Jerusalem came under 400 years of Ottoman rule [1514-1917]. This was an other era of peace, justice and mutual co-existence of Muslims, Christians and Jews. This ended on the fall of Ottoman Empire, through British treachery, revolt of Arabs, incited by British through Arab nationalism, intrigue and deceit. Well known Orientalist, 'Karin Armstrong', in her book 'The Battle for God' writes that, the Jews under Muslims rule were not oppressed, as there is no tradition of anti-Semitism in Islamic world. They Jews enjoyed complete religious freedom and could settle their issues through their own laws; they were much more interdependent than the Jews of Europe in mainstream cultural activities and trade.

Muslims and Christian Chasm: Many misconceptions exist in the West about Islam and Muslims, which were deliberately created by the Christian clergy and medieval rulers to disguise the true message of Islam to justify their hostility towards Islam. W. Montgomery Watt, a Western scholar observed: "Among the world's major religions it is certainly Islam that the West has the most difficulty in approaching objectively. The reason for this are rooted in past history. Because of the crusades in the 12th and 13th centuries many people in the West wanted the religion of Islam to be better known. But the image they portrayed of Islam can quite accurately be qualified as 'distorted'. Western opinion about Islam and Muslims was based for centuries on the distorted image."

The major misconceptions created in the minds of westerners against Islam and Muslims may be summed up as:

1) The God of Islam is different to the God of Jews and Christians. He is a ruthless God, urging Muslims to kill any one not believing in their faith.
2) Muslims are pagans who worship a black cubical structure at Makkah.
3) The Prophet of Islam was a warrior and conqueror who did not believe in the human rights and preached violence.
4) Islam was spread with the sword.
5) The scripture of Islam is based on the Old and New Testaments.

6) The women are treated as subhuman by the Muslims; polygamy and veil are to exploit the women, they have no human rights.
7) The Islamic Law (Shari'a) is very harsh, is based on strict punishment without meeting the requirements of justice; it awards flogging, cutting of hand and stoning to death, all primitive laws of ancient times.
8) Muslims hate the Western values, considering them as thereat, hence they resort to aggression and violence as a means to undermine and destroy Western values so that they can enforce their values on the West.

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Illusion of 'Chosen Race' & Zionist Movement:

Still obsessed with the illusion of 'Chosen Race', Jews wanted to get 'The Promised Land' [Palestine and Jerusalem], the Christian West hate Jews due to historic (alleged killers of Jesus Christ) and economic reasons (control economy being money lenders). During the French Revolution, the Jews acquired civil equality which facilitated them to realize their old cherished dreams.

Thus the seeds of the Zionist movement were sown by Austrian journalist Theodor Herzl, who founded political Zionism derived from Mount Zion (Moriah, site of Solomon's Temple) in Jerusalem. Thus began the process of settlement of Jews in Palestine at the cost of expulsion of Palestinians through all means including, coercion, money, pressure and massacre through terrorism. The Holocaust [unfortunate and regrettable event] acted as a catalyst, later it was well exploited by Jews to achieve their aim. Prior to it, in 1917, British through Balfour Declaration supported the establishment of a national homeland for Jews in Palestine, provided that the rights of existing communities would be safeguarded. [self contradictory statement].

The Largest '13th Tribe- Jews by Conversion:

The 'right of return' is a founding principle of Israel. This implies that the Jews who have settled in the Zionist state are the descendants of the original twelve Israeli tribes of who went into exile and for centuries lived in the Diaspora. A further inference is that most of the Jews living in Israel and elsewhere are Semites descended from ancestors who came from the Middle East. But what if most Jews today are not of Semitic stock at all? How would this affect their claim to be the 'chosen people' with a claim to the Promised Land? These are some of the questions raised by Arthur Koestler in his remarkable book "The Thirteenth Tribe". Written in 1976, it has been out of print since 1982. [Koestler himself a Jew and at one time an active Zionist].

The author mentions that around 740 C.E something remarkable happened in Khazaria (northern Caucasus region, Central Eurasia): its ruler and his immediate family and court converted to Judaism. [Medieval Jewish Kingdom] Historians have long speculated on the reasons for this seemingly bizarre decision. The consensus is that

since the empire was located between the Muslim Caliphate and Christian Byzantium, the Kagan sought to shield his people and his kingdom from the ideological pull of either power centre by opting for an older and much respected faith. An additional factor in his calculus might have been the presence of many Jews in his kingdom who had fled persecution in Christian lands.
In their three centuries of decline, many Khazar tribes migrated westwards into East Europe, and especially to Hungary, Poland and Lithuania. When Genghis Khan's Golden Horde broke apart in the 14th century, the anarchy its disintegration spread forced many settled Khazars to move westwards for a living. Soon the steppes were emptied of farmers and craftsmen. Colonies were established in Russia and in other East European lands. The fact that as early as 1267, a Papal legate decreed that Jews should not be permitted to construct more than one synagogue per town indicates their growing numbers in Europe. It is Koestler's thesis — and he is supported by many scholars — that most European, American and Israeli Jews today are descendants of the Khazars, and not the original twelve tribes.
In a concluding appendix, Koestler writes: "While this book deals with past history, it unavoidably carries certain implications for the present and future… [and] it may be maliciously misinterpreted as a denial of the State of Israel's right to exist…" He goes on to say, quite correctly: "Whether the chromosomes of its people contain genes of Khazar or Semitic, Roman or Spanish origin, is irrelevant, and cannot affect Israel's right to exist — nor the moral obligation of any civilized person, Gentile or Jew, to defend that right…" However, having acquired their state, Zionists cannot really claim to be the 'chosen people', and occupy Palestinian lands on that basis. As we have seen, far too many have descended from The 13th Tribe for them to lay claim to all the Promised Land , writes Irfan Husain, in his article "The Promised Land & the 'Thirteenth Tribe".

Change of Heart-Why Christians Favour Jews?

The centuries long Christians abomination of Jews, being alleged killer of their God, [Son of God (Jesus Christ)] and due to their dominant position as controller of economy need no elaboration. Then what happened suddenly in 19th century that this hatred (anti-Semitism) got converted to the love for the Jews to get them a home land? The answer is not that simple, it requires deep pondering.
The Jews, though a very small group among the community of nations (Total: 14 Millions, 0.2 % of world population) enjoy disproportionate high status due to their strong hold at the international economy, financial system and media specially of USA and Europe. They have worked hard to remain abreast with the latest knowledge, scientific development and have positively contributed in the scientific discoveries and development of host countries. Their full control over international media which acts as a tool to mould the national and international public opinion in their favour with impunity. Through superior diplomacy they have been able to create conditions where by the American and Europeans fully support the Israeli cause employing all means including use of force. They are getting lot of support from the Evangelicals.

Evangelist Christians & Neo Conservatives [Neocons]:

Evangelicals are basically Protestants who believe that each individual has a need for spiritual rebirth and personal commitment to Jesus Christ as savior, through faith in his atoning death on the cross (commonly, although not necessarily, through a specific conversion experience). They emphasize strict orthodoxy on cardinal doctrines, morals, and especially on the authority of the Bible. They reject the official interpretation of dogma by the Roman Catholic Church. Many Evangelicals follow a traditional, pre-critical interpretation of the Bible and insist on its inerrancy (freedom from error in history as well as in faith and morals). They may be considered as Christian Fundamentalists.

The influential, pro-Israel Evangelical Christians in the United States believe that until the ancient land of Israel is restored to the Jews in the holy land, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and therefore Armageddon, will not occur. According to this dogma, until these events take place, good Christians will not be raised to the Kingdom of Heaven. This doctrine go to the very foundation of the state of Israel, and the open-ended support it receives from the United States, they enter the realm of politics. The Neocons have also been lured in, so this politically powerful lobby in USA has been made to serve the Jewish cause well.

The Jews have used their power and influence not only to establish the state of Israel but the continuous suppression of Palestinians, the main threat to the world peace. The European Jews could have given land in Europe to redress the atrocities, Christian West had committed against them for centuries. Creating Israel was an act of blatant colonization, oppression and violation of all international rules and customs. The European Christians and Americans achieved many objectives in one go, only few are mentioned here:-

1) Getting rid of Jewish problem by settling them away from the mainland Europe.
2) Controlling the oil rich and geostrategically important Middle East through their corny.
3) Creating a permanent trouble spot to embroil the Arabs, Muslims and Jews in a never ending conflict with religious overtones, there by controlling their economies, resources and maintaining military and economic hegemony.
4) To please the Evangelist Christians & Neocons (as known now), growing in influence and power for religious and political reasons.
5) Colonization of Palestine:

In 1947, before partition of Palestine, there were 1.3 million Palestinians and 0.63 million Jews in Palestine (mostly immigrants not locals). In 1947, Palestine was partitioned by the United Nations, the ill equipped Arabs could not stand to the well trained, Zionist forces of terror, hardened in 2nd World War. By 1948, Zionist had captured 75% of Palestine. The Palestinians were expelled form their homes in distress. In 1947, Jews owned only 6% land in Palestine By the time the state was established, it had confiscated 90% of the land. Later (1967, 1973) Israelis extended their occupation to the West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights and even part of Lebanon. They captured but

returned Sinai under a deal with Egyptians. While the miseries of Palestinians continue, there is no end to this conflict in sight. The numerous resolutions adopted by United Nations Organization have been blatantly rejected by Israel since its creation. The low intensity resistance through *Intifada* by Hamas continues. The disunity among PLO and Hamas on power struggle is providing good opportunities to Israel to increase the settlements for more and more land grabbing.

The Real Agenda- Future Plans of Zionists:

Some recorded historic statements by the Israeli Zionist leaders appended below are self explanatory:

"If I were an Arab leader, I would never sign an agreement with Israel. It is normal; we have taken their country. It is true God promised it to us, but how could that interest them? Our God is not theirs. There has been Anti-Semitism, the Nazis, Hitler, Auschwitz, but was that their fault? They see but one thing: we have come and we have stolen their country. Why would they accept that?" David Ben Gurion (the first Israeli Prime Minister) quoted by Nahum Goldmann in Le Paraddoxe Juif (The Jewish Paradox), pp121.

"We will have to face the reality that Israel is neither innocent, nor redemptive. And that in its creation, and expansion; we as Jews, have caused what we historically have suffered; a refugee population in Diaspora." Martin Buber, Jewish Philosopher, addressed Prime Minister Ben Gurion on the moral character of the state of Israel with reference to the Arab refugees in March 1949.

"The present map of Palestine was drawn by the British mandate. The Jewish people have another map which our youth and adults should strive to fulfill -- From the Nile to the Euphrates." Bin Gurion

"Has any People ever been seen to give up their territory of their own free will? In the same way, the Arabs of Palestine will not renounce their sovereignty without violence." Vladimir Jabotinsky (the founder and advocate of the Zionist terrorist organizations), Quoted by Maxime Rodinson in Peuple Juif ou Problem Juif. (Jewish People or Jewish Problem).

"Every time we do something you tell me America will do this and will do that . . . I want to tell you something very clear: Don't worry about American pressure on Israel. We, the Jewish people, control America, and the Americans know it." Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, October 3, 2001, to Shimon Peres, as reported on Kol Yisrael radio.

"We have to kill all the Palestinians unless they are resigned to live here as slaves." Chairman Heilbrun of the Committee for the Re-election of General Shlomo Lahat, the mayor of Tel Aviv, October 1983.

"Zionist colonization must either be terminated or carried out against the wishes of the native population. This colonization can, therefore, be continued and make progress only under the protection of a power independent of the native population - an iron wall, which will be in a position to resist the pressure to the native population. This is our policy towards the Arabs..." Vladimir Jabotinsky, The Iron Wall, 1923.

"A voluntary reconciliation with the Arabs is out of the question either now or in the future. If you wish to colonize a land in which people are already living, you must provide a garrison for the land, or find some rich man or benefactor who will provide a garrison on your behalf. Or else-or else, give up your colonization, for without an armed force which will render physically impossible any attempt to destroy or prevent this colonization, colonization is impossible, not difficult, not dangerous, but IMPOSSIBLE!... Zionism is a colonization adventure and therefore it stands or falls by the question of armed force. It is important... to speak Hebrew, but, unfortunately, it is even more important to be able to shoot - or else I am through with playing at colonizing." Vladimir Jabotinsky, founder of Revisionist Zionism (precursor of Likud), The Iron Wall, 1923

"Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You do not even know the names of these Arab villages, and I do not blame you because geography books no longer exist. Not only do the books not exist, the Arab villages are not there either. Nahlal arose in the place of Mahlul; Kibbutz Gvat in the place of Jibta; Kibbutz Sarid in the place of Huneifis; and Kefar Yehushua in the place of Tal al-Shuman. There is not a single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population." Moshe Dayan, address to the Technion, Haifa, reported in Haaretz, April 4, 1969.

"We must do everything to insure they (the Palestinians) never do return." Assuring his fellow Zionists that Palestinians will never come back to their homes. "The old will die and the young will forget." David Ben-Gurion, in his diary, 18 July 1948, quoted in Michael Bar Zohar's Ben-Gurion: the Armed Prophet, Prentice-Hall, 1967, p. 157.

"Israel should have exploited the repression of the demonstrations in China, when world attention focused on that country, to carry out mass expulsions among the Arabs of the territories." Benyamin Netanyahu, then Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister, former Prime Minister of Israel, tells students at Bar Ilan University, From the Israeli journal Hotam, November 24, 1989.

"Everybody has to move, run and grab as many hilltops as they can to enlarge the settlements because everything we take now will stay ours... Everything we don't grab will go to them." Ariel Sharon, Israeli Foreign Minister, addressing a meeting of militants from the extreme right-wing Tsomet Party, Agence France Presse, November 15, 1998.

Reality Exposed by a Jewish Woman: In 1999, Susan Nathan moved from the UK to Israel, taking advantage of the Jewish state’s standing offer of automatic citizenry for any Jew. Nathan soon learned that a million Israeli Arabs live in the country as well; descended from those Palestinians who refused to flee during Israel’s initial seizure of land and homes. Today, those citizens — referred to not as Palestinians but as ‘the Arabs’ by the Jewish majority — live in cramped, squalid conditions, their rights abridged, and their voices unheard in public. Many of their villages have been razed and planted over with pine forests. They are, for all intent and purposes, an invisible population. Leaving her home and career in Tel Aviv, she moved into a small, third-story apartment in the village of Tamra, the only Jew living openly in a town of some

20,000 residents. She records her experience in her book; "The Other Side of Israel". Nathan describes injustice piled atop injustice, as Israel's Arab citizens struggle against ridiculous odds. She declares that 'Israel chose the path of apartheid' in creating its twin systems of law for Jews and non-Jews. More provocatively, she compares the current plight of Israeli Arabs with that of European Jews in the 1930s. Watching a film about the Holocaust, she takes in the scenes of Jews being driven from their ghettos and remarks, 'I could not help but see a parallel with what had happened to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians only three years after the Holocaust.'[http://65.175.69.196/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/in-paper-magazine/books-and-authors/a-people-without-a-land]

Word of Caution for Muslims: Keeping in view the history of Children of Israel, and their own history, the Muslims have to be conscious to prove themselves to be worthy of these great responsibilities. As long as they adhere to the guidance provided by God thorough Qur'an and traditions of the Last Prophet (pbuh), they lead the world, but when ever they faltered, they were entitled for divine punishment in various forms: "And how many a community revolted against the ordinance of its Lord and His messenger, and we called it to a stern account and punished it with dire punishment"(Qur'an;65:68). "Corruption doth appear on land and sea because of (the evil) which men's hands have done, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return" (Qur'an;30:41). However there is always a group among them who remain on the right path and endeavour to keep others along too.

Muslims Revived the Legacy of Abraham: History is witness to the fact that the Muslims became the world leader with in short span of time. They were given the control on the Promised Land, rebuilt the house of worship near the original site of 'Solomon's House of worship of God', the site sacred to Muslims as well. In 750 the author of book 'Miracles of Rabi Shamoun Bin Youhai' call the Dome of The Rock as beginning of messianic age, while praising the Muslim Caliph, he says; 'This Jew loving ruler has ended the disrespect to Zion and the Temple. The Caliph has cleaned the Moriah and built the mosque at the rock of Temple.' ['Jerusalem: One City Three Faiths' by Karin Armstrong]

Qur'an for Equitable Treatment to Peaceful Non Believers: It is wrongly propagated that Qur'an encourages violence against non believers, rather contrary is true: "It may be that God will ordain love between you and those of them with whom you are at enmity. God is Mighty, and God is Forgiving, Merciful. God does not forbid you to be kind and equitable to those who had neither fought against your faith nor driven you out of your homes. In fact Allah loves the equitable. God only forbids you to make friendship with those who fought you on account of your faith and drove you out of your homes and backed up others in your expulsion. Those who will take them for friends are indeed the wrongdoers."(Qur'an;60:7-9). Islam only forbids Muslims to take unbelievers as 'protecting friends' (those making mockery of faith, Qur'an;5:51,87).

Only Allah, his messenger and true believers are their 'protecting friends' (Qur'an;5:55, 56).

Special Status of Jews and Christians in Islam: The People of Scriptures (Jews and Christians) enjoy special status in Islam. Muslims are allowed to eat Halal food and to marry their women: "We blessed him and Isaac both. Among their progeny there are some who are righteous and some who are clearly wrong doing to their own souls." (Qur'an;37:113). "In the nation of Moses there were some who guided others with the truth and thereby established justice." (Qur'an;7:159). "Yet they are not all alike: there are some among the People of the Book who are upright, who recite the revelations of Allah all night long and then prostrate before Him" (Qur'an;3:113). "..amongst these (Christians) are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world and they are not arrogant"(Qur'an;5:82). Sham Arguments for Colonization of Palestine:

However no one may be allowed to impose their will on the pretext of being 'Chosen Race' or 'Chosen People', having divine right to colonize "Promised, Holy or Blessed Land" on the basis of their scriptures, modified to suit their self interests. No such claim is proven to exist now in the Last Scripture. It is evident from above that there is no religious justification even according to the Bible read in the light of Qur'an, for Zionists to lay any claim on Jerusalem and Palestine. God is Just; He had fulfilled His Promise to the Children of Israel in 10th century B.C.E in the period of King and Prophet David and Solomon (peace be upon them) and thereafter. Due to their rebellion and transgression mentioned in Bible, Qur'an and evident from their conduct even now, God has assigned the role to Muslims, to pass the message of God to the humanity. The mosque and Dome of the Rock was built on the site abandoned since 70 CE, cleared of garbage by the Muslims. They did not destroy any temple, rather built the house of worship of One God, the same Supreme God of Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, David, Solomon, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). So there is no reason to claim it form Muslims even on the basis of historic continuity after 2 K or 1.4 K years.

If such claims are to be accepted, then Muslims ruled Spain for 800 years [expelled under coercion and inquisition], India for almost 1000 years, Greece and parts of Europe for 400 years, central Asian countries for centuries and so on, the list is long. Will European and USA support Muslims to get back these lands by use of force, especially Spain, as done in the case of Israel?

Geopolitics Under the Cover of Religion: This is geopolitics in play under the cover of religion which should be tackled accordingly. The situation on ground is that Israel with full support of USA and West has not only established itself but is expanding the area under occupation at the cost of Palestinians through settlements. Presently the Arab and Muslims world is not militarily strong enough to get the area vacated by force; they are embroiled in their own disputes and problems. So what should be done? Should the Muslims Ummah and the Palestinians accept Israeli hegemonic designs and occupation to live as slaves in their own land? No self respecting individual and especially a Muslim will ever accept it.

Conclusion:

This short review of the most complex geopolitical and religious issue, in the light of Bible, Qur'an & History bring us to conclusion that an urgent solution has to be found before its too late. West lead by US periodically pretend to undertake initiative to make an effort to bridge the gulf between the Muslim world and the West (Christians), while emphasizing their friendship with Israel they do emphasize the need for establishment of Palestinian state, but the word lack substance, not backed by will to implement.

The people oppressed by powerful colonial forces have no choice but to struggle for their rights and independence. Islam does not encourage violence but it urges its adherents to strive against oppression. Jihad (striving in the cause of God, with all means) in true sense is applicable to Palestinians; there is complete consensus among all the Islamic scholars on this. Even by normal standards of a civilized society, this is the war of liberation thrust upon the Palestinians by the Zionists with full support of their colonial masters. It is obligatory upon the Muslims, that they should extend all sort of political, moral, diplomatic and material support to their Palestinian brothers in this just cause, through their respective governments.

The present half hearted effort is not enough. Arabs and Muslims world should think of other options and measures, which should hit the economic and political interests of Zionist and their supporters. These actions should be well planned and well coordinated to be result oriented. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, (OIC), [*Munazamat Al-Mu`Tamir Al-Islami*], the biggest forum of Muslim countries need to play effective role. This will ultimately result in creating suitable conditions to bring the aggressor on table for equitable, peaceful settlement of the issue, acceptable to Palestinians and Muslims.

If the OIC and the governments of Muslims countries don't meet their obligations, then people have to exert pressure upon their governments through various peaceful means, like protests, and demonstrations. In no case non-state groups, individuals or political parties should be allowed to hijack this noble peaceful endeavour for their own agenda and interests. It is hoped that people of any faith, with character, courage and moral values will come forward to mobilize the pubic opinion.

Renowned Indian scholar, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan suggests a [temporary] peaceful solution to the issue of worship at Jerusalem [paving the way for final peaceful settlement], by separating the issue of worship from that of political supremacy. He draws support of his argument from the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) by applying the principle of '*Al-fasl bayn al-qaziyatayn*' that is, to keep the two aspects of a controversial issue separate from one another.

Though there have been set backs, 1.5 Billons Muslims, almost one fifth of humanity, still continue to enjoy an important position in the world, they are geo-strategically located at the important population and communication centers, rich in natural resources, backed by history of great civilization. By turning back to the teachings of Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh), they can again achieve ascendancy in knowledge, with hard work and firmness in faith they can regain the lost ground, so

important for the stability of this planet and the world peace. The present turmoil resulting in to killing of Muslims by fellow Muslims on the name of Islam is neither part of teaching of Qur'an nor the Sunnah (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It appears to be enjoying the covert support of major power players. Any action leading to the weakening of Muslim states will serve the cause of enemies of Islam only. "Allah never changes the condition of a people until they intend to change it themselves"(Qur'an;13:11). Despite all the propaganda unleashed through the biased media, Islam is the fastest growing religion in Europe and North America, because Muslims are conveying the message of God to the humanity through peaceful preaching: "There is no compulsion in religion. True guidance has been made clearly distinct from error. And he who rejects power of evil and believes in God has grasped a firm handhold which will never break. God is Hearer, Knower."(Qur'an;2:256)
"It is He who has sent His Apostle with Guidance and the Religion of Truth to proclaim it over all religion: and enough is God for a Witness".(Qur'an;48:28). "Praise be to God Who has revealed the Book (Qur'an) to His servant (Muhammad) and did not make it complicated. It is straightforward so that He may warn about the terrible punishment for the unbelievers from Him and give good news to the believers who do good deeds that they shall have a goodly reward,"(Qur'an;18:1-2)**."Our Sustainer! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake." (Qur'an;2:286)**

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A REMINDER-WHAT ISLAM EXPECTS FROM THE MUSLIMS!

1. To inhere in their best civilization and matchless culture in a manner that they surpass all the civilized nations of the world. They should be the most prosperous of all as far as the different branches of knowledge are concerned. Invite the humanity towards Islam, by conveying the message with wisdom, peacefully, in a logical and convincing way. They should argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious.
2. Not to kill the innocent people of any faith (including own self, through suicide) except by law, they don't have to create mischief on earth by creating anarchy or disturbing the peaceful coexistence. To use the right of retaliation to any injustice or oppression with equality, not exceeding the limits forgiveness and patience is however preferable.
3. Warfare against injustice and oppression and self defence is permissible, to be declared by the Islamic State but the rules lay down for its conduct by Shari'a (Islamic Law) be strictly adhered to. Those who surrender or do not fight or remain neutral are not to be disturbed. The prisoners are to protected and provided peace and security.
4. To fulfill all bilateral and international accords (like UN Charter) for peace and stability of humanity. To treat all members of society with equality fairness and justice.
5. Non Muslims in the Islamic society enjoy complete protections and freedom to practice their faith. Theur places of worship be protected.
6. Do not abuse or degrade the god/ gods of non Muslims. Do not use coercion against non Muslims for conversion to Islam.
7. Do not call other Muslims as apostate or unbelievers because, if a Muslim fails to perform some of his obligations and is negligent in practice or commits some such actions as are forbidden, yet he believes in the liability of all obligations and the impropriety of all unlawful deeds, he will continue to be a Muslim but a sinner. [*The concept of Takfeer i.e declaring a non-practicing Muslim, to be 'apostate', to justify murder; is rejected by majority scholars and is against Islamic Consensus*].

What is NOT demanded by Islam!

- Islam does not demand form a Muslim to give up the world altogether.
- Islam does not expect Muslims to be ignorant, lacking in knowledge of their faith and other branches of knowledge.
- Nor does it require one to make the mosque a permanent abode, never to leave it.
- Islam also does not insist that one should live in a cave and spend his whole life there Not at all